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Character Connections

Character Education and
Development

RESPONSIBILITY

November 2006

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Click on Plate to order!
Purchase "A State of
Good Character" license
plate.

\$17 from each \$25 plate goes
directly to support character
education efforts throughout
Arizona.

Contact Us

Arizona Dept. of Education
Character Education
and Development
1535 W. Jefferson St. Bin#18
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ade.az.gov/charactered

charactered@azed.gov



azcharacteredfoundation.org

For Teachers

"We can't choose the circumstances in which we grow up. But all of us choose how to deal with the outrages and opportunities of life. From these choices, our character is formed."

Character Counts!sm

Responsibility means to...

Be Accountable	Do your Duty
Exercise Self-Control	Set a Good Example
Plan and Set Goals	Pursue Excellence
Choose A Positive Attitude!	

K-8th Grade Lesson Plans

5th- 12th Grade Lesson Plan

Civic Responsibility (World History /Veteran's Day)

Curriculum and online student voting at
www.kidsvotingaz.org

Books that Teach Character!

100 Ways to Bring Character Education to Life

How Classroom "Jobs" Teach Responsibility

Both students and teachers love classroom jobs. Students love this system because they will be responsible for a certain task that helps the classroom as a whole. Teachers will love it because, not only will the system eliminate a few things from their To Do Lists, but they can also watch the children rise to the occasion and learn how to be responsible.

[READ MORE...](#)

For Parents

Feel free to **cut and paste** the following excerpt from "What's A Parent to Do?" by Peggy Adkins to share with parents...

Responsibility is doing what you are supposed to do. Responsible people think ahead, set reasonable goals, control their tempers and always do their best. They don't give up easily, especially when others are counting on them. They are accountable for the consequences of their choices; they don't blame others for their mistakes.

Help your family show responsibility...

- Think before you act.
- Be reliable. Always perform your duties.
- Set a good example in what you say and do. Act as if someone you respect is always watching.
- Do your best! Make everything you do worthy of pride.
- Don't blame others for your mistakes.

FREE copies of "What's A Parent to Do?" can be ordered at www.ade.az.gov/charactered

[Click Here For Printable
Parent Handout](#)

What a T.R.R.F.C.C. School!

Three years ago, a group of teachers at Hillcrest Middle attended their first Character Counts!sm training in Phoenix. Inspiration took root and soon students and parents took notice. Since that time, the "Character Committee" at Hillcrest has spearheaded a variety of activities to make good character the cornerstone of everything that takes place at this excelling school.

Coordinated by Teacher Denise Parrino, Rose Hermansen Margit Goodman, Lynda Ridge, Leanne Larkins and enthusiastically supported by Principal Dannene Truett, students take part in character-related recognition and incentive programs, fundraisers, art and service projects throughout the year. Parents have also donated time and artistic talent to make a visible presence of character throughout the school campus.

Twice each week, teachers spend instructional time for character lessons but they know that teaching good character goes well beyond a lesson plan, it must become a way of life.

That's T.R.R.F.C.C., Hillcrest!

[Click Here to see Hillcrest's Character Counts! webpage](#)

Hillcrest Middle School



Want to be featured as a T.R.R.F.C.C. school?

Tell us what your school is doing to promote good character. Email us at charactered@azed.gov.



"We are not here merely to make a living. We are here to enrich the world."
Woodrow Wilson



Rainy day schedule?

Rewarding students with a Movie Day?

Seize your movie-watching time as an opportunity to teach character by planning ahead with Teachwithmovies.org.

This website provides an extensive list of movie titles aligned with the Six Pillars of Character!™

[Click Here for classic and current movie titles that teach good character!](#)

Foundations for Life Arizona and National Essay Writing Competition

"Gossip needn't be false to be evil—there's a lot of truth that should not be passed around' ...soon all the kids were laughing at him and calling him names because I had let it slip to one kid that he had diabetes...Joseph cried a lot after that. This proves gossip can hurt kids even if it is true."

Excerpt from 2006 National Scholarship Winning Essay by Chris Whitlock, Flagstaff, AZ

Give your students an opportunity to **reflect upon, express and commit to good character** with the possibility of earning scholarship awards!

Foundations for Life is a maxim-based essay and recognition program for students K-12 that enhances the reading, critical thinking and composition skills of your students.

Visit www.ade.az.gov/charactered for complete contest instructions and rules!

Each School District is encouraged to submit one winning essay per grade level to:

Arizona Department of Education
1535 W. Jefferson St. Bin #18
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Prizes awarded to Local and National Winners!
Submission Deadline: January 31, 2007.

Foundations for Life
teaching materials can be
used throughout the
school year!
Visit FFL-essays.org to
[order your FREE Kit](#)
[today!](#)



Turn your canned food drive into a teachable moment...

It's that time of year again. Students throughout Arizona will be participating in service projects that will help their communities and people in need. *Did you know that service projects needn't be an 'extra' in the school day but rather an **integral part of student learning**? Did you also know that service projects can be done **throughout the school year** as a way to enhance student learning in every subject area?*

What Service Learning is...

- ♦ A method of teaching that combines community service with curriculum-based learning
- ♦ Linked to academic content and standards
- ♦ Reciprocal in nature, benefiting both student and community
- ♦ An effective way to encourage and foster active citizenship as part of education

What Service Learning is NOT...

- ♦ An "add-on" to the existing curriculum
- ♦ Logging a certain number of service hours in order to graduate
- ♦ Compensatory service assigned as a form of punishment
- ♦ Only for high school or college students

How to Get Started...

Visit Mesa Public Schools Service Learning website for information on integrating service projects into every subject area, a list of project ideas, and more!

Benefits of Service Learning to Students

Cognitive
basic skills, critical thinking, problem solving
Interpersonal
communication, teamwork, citizenship,
cultural diversity/awareness, empathy
Personal
responsibility, self esteem, leadership
Career
career exploration, job-related skills

Benefits of Service Learning to Schools

- ♦ Motivated and engaged learners
- ♦ Great possibilities for enriched curriculum, interdisciplinary learning performance-based evaluation
- ♦ Rejuvenated faculty and staff
- ♦ Enhanced sense of community



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Service Learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to:

enrich the learning experience,
teach civic responsibility,
and strengthen communities.

Check out these great resources for more information!

[National Service Learning](#)

[Points of Light Foundation](#)

[Mesa Public Schools](#)
Service Learning program with loads of ideas

firstfoodbank.org
Information on hosting food drives and volunteering at Valley food banks

volunteerphoenix.org
makeadifference.org
Local youth service project opportunities

Tell us what **YOUR STUDENTS** are doing to serve their community!
Email us at charactered@ade.gov. We'll include your students in *Character Connections*.



Character Challenge 6K Run / Walk

March 4, 2007

Wesley Bolin Plaza
Downtown Phoenix

Teams are forming now!
Click below to register!



Important Dates

November 15th:

Character Celebration!

December 7th:

Strategic Planning / K-6th Classroom Implementation Workshop

See *Calendar of Events* to register online at www.ade.az.gov

January 31, 2007:

Arizona Foundations for Life essay submission deadline

March 4, 2007:

Character Challenge 6K Run/ Walk

Deer Valley Unified School District: Going places with great character



Boulder Creek High School Principal Kevin Imes at "Creating a Community of Character", an event that included over 70 parents, teachers, administrators, and community leaders in June 2006

In the **Deer Valley Unified School District**, as in all school districts, the education of the whole child is our #1 goal. It's reflected in our vision, our mission, our core values and in our day to day operations. Part of that commitment can be seen in the efforts of a group of DVUSD schools who have joined together to focus on character education.

Realizing the need to make a powerful, positive difference in the lives of children, the **Boulder Creek Community Leadership Council (BCCLC)** was formed in the spring of 2006. Begun by administrators, staff members, parents, and community leaders (Anthem, Boulder Creek High, Desert Mountain, Diamond Canyon, Gavilan Peak, New River, Canyon Springs and Sunset Ridge) **the goal of the BCCLC is to help plan for and implement CHARACTER COUNTS!™ as a community-wide tool for creating a community of character.**

Beginning in June of 2006 the BCCLC, with assistance from ADE planned and held "Creating a Community of Character". During this evening event, **over 70 parents, teachers, administrators, and community leaders came together to get an introduction to Character Counts! and began planning to make a community of caring a reality.**

Since that time, several task forces have been formed to focus on education and training, events and involvement, and public relations and communication. **A calendar has been developed that helps all eight schools stay focused on the same pillar each month.** This schedule has been **shared with community groups, churches, and businesses** so that everyone in the community can know about and be involved in our focus for the month.

Additional training opportunities for parents and staff are on-going and facilitated by trained personnel. An additional eight staff members and three community leaders completed their Character Development Seminar in August. A resource binder that is undergoing construction monthly is shared with all schools and includes resources for staff and parents. At **Boulder Creek High School the Art Club has taken on the challenge of creating our own pillar posters to be used in schools and throughout the community.**

The vision shared by the BCCLC to create a community of caring is rather large. We know that working together we will ultimately achieve our goal. Each month new community members, parents, and staff make the commitment to join the efforts adding to the possibilities. With a focus on quality not quantity to ensure sustainability, **we know we have a long way to go, but we're excited about the journey.**

*Kenna Hough
Parent / Community Involvement Manager
Deer Valley USD*

[Click Here to see BCCLC's webpage!](#)

Consider Character...

So often we forget that it is our **RESPONSIBILITY** to be a person of good character, to role model the behavior we would like to see in others, to take time to reflect on who we are and how we fit into our world. Without reflection we are unable to grow or change. Often we just continue to do the same thing we have always done and consequently we receive the same results.

In this month of honoring our veterans, making choices that will affect others and ourselves through exercising our responsibility to vote, and taking the time to offer gratitude at Thanksgiving, remember to continually "Consider Character".

The inspiration for the following came from a piece by Mother Teresa and one by Michael Josephson. (Excellent sources, yes?) I took their wisdom, added some of my own, and.....

It's not easy to be honest and trustworthy; to keep inconvenient promises. People may cheat you or mock you. **Be trustworthy anyway.**

It's not easy to stand up for your beliefs and still respect differing viewpoints; to refrain from gossip or to admit error. Do it anyway.

It's not easy to consistently do your best work; to fail and still keep trying. It may never seem to be enough. **Give your best anyway.**

It's not easy to judge generously; to give the benefit of the doubt; to play fair when others cheat. **Be fair anyway.**

It's not easy to be consistently kind; to think of others first; to judge generously; to give the benefit of the doubt. People may accuse you of ulterior motives. **Be kind anyway.**

Let's be honest. Ethics is not for wimps. It's not easy being a good person; consistently doing your share in the community; staying informed and voting. Be a good citizen and a good person anyway.

*Diane Ball
Director, Character Education and Development*